

PRECONVENTION ISSUE

SEPTEMBER 2023

WORLD WATERPARK™

The Official Magazine of the World Waterpark Association

Wilderness Resorts And Waterparks:

Pioneering Innovations In The Waterpark Industry

When It's Time, It's Time...
Splash Kingdom Updates Their Classic
"Kids Castle" With The All New Pelican Pier

**The Ultimate Aquatic Escape
In Central New York**
Splash Indoor Water Park Resort

Diversity, Equity And Inclusion:
Why They Matter In The Workplace

WILDERNESS RESORTS AND WATERPARKS:
*PIONEERING
INNOVATIONS*
IN THE WATERPARK INDUSTRY



W

hen Tom Lucke opened the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells in 1995 little did he know he would be helping to lay the foundation of the immensely successful indoor waterpark industry. At the time his resort had just 79 units, a 35,000 square foot indoor waterpark called Fort Wilderness, two outdoor pools and a spa.

The indoor waterpark, however, was so incredibly popular that in just four years the Wilderness grew to include 282 guest rooms, 28 vacation villas and a second 60,000 square foot indoor waterpark called Klondike Kavern.

According to Joe Eck, COO of Wilderness Resorts and Waterparks, "The indoor waterpark concept truly was a game changer, not only for our resort, but for Wisconsin Dells. Our town went from being a summer destination that shuttered its doors in winter to being a sought-after, year-round destination recognized as the 'Waterpark Capital of the World'. For people in the Midwest, the indoor waterpark concept became a way for them to escape winter without having to hop on a plane."

Today, Wilderness Resort has 446 guest rooms at its main hotel, all of which were renovated in 2022; 108 two and three-bedroom condo units at Wilderness on the Lake; 460 condo units at Glacier Canyon Lodge; 40 freestanding vacation villas; 35 cabins; 76 frontier condos; and soon the resort will be unveiling eight, 4000-square foot treehouse cabins each capable of sleeping 22 people. In all there are 1,173 lodging options.

There are also now over 12 football fields of waterpark fun at Wil-

derness Resort, spread out over four indoor and four outdoor waterparks. These waterparks are home to many of the most popular and greatest waterpark attractions, like ProSlide's mat racers, Tornado and Cannonbowl slides and WhiteWater's Aqualoop and Aquadrop.

Eck says, "Our resort helped to introduce the indoor waterpark resort concept to the world, so now it is our company's mission to remain a leader in the industry and always be on the cutting edge. We want our guests to look forward to their next visit knowing there will be something fun and new for them to explore, be it a new waterslide, dry attraction or food venue."

KEEPING IT FRESH

While the owners of Wilderness Resort make it their mission to add something or renovate something annually, in 2022 the resort really went big by updating its 70,000 square foot Wild West indoor waterpark. It received a new multi-level play and spray structure; a two-lane dueling tube ride; and a two-lane dueling mat racer, all manufactured by ProSlide. Both the tube ride and mat racer ride feature Prolucent translucent tube sections with themed cut outs to further enhance the excitement within the slides. Further, each has multiple rally points where riders can see how they are doing compared to their competition. The waterpark also added a new swim-up bar called YeeHaw's Watering Hole and reimaged their nine western-themed cabanas surrounding the area.



“THE INDOOR WATERPARK
CONCEPT TRULY WAS
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From dine-in restaurants to grab-and-go eateries to sweet-and-treat shops, the Wilderness has all the dining options covered.



On the food and beverage side, the Wilderness food and beverage team added Bear Paw's gourmet funnel cakes inside the waterpark's quick service area and the Swimm'n Chick'n on the mezzanine level of the Wild West waterpark. It features a menu focused on hand-crafted gourmet chicken tenders with mouth-watering sauces, biscuits, coleslaw and rooster fries.

MORE IN THE WORKS IN SEVIERVILLE TN

In 2008, Wilderness Resorts and Waterparks saw a huge opportunity to establish a waterpark presence in the South when it opened Wilderness at the Smokies in Sevierville, TN. Much like in Wisconsin Dells, the company hasn't rested on its laurels. In 2020, during the pandemic, it expanded its presence by opening its third business venture, Soaky Mountain Waterpark, across the street from Wilderness at the Smokies.

Today, Wilderness at the Smokies consists of 234 units at Stone Hill Lodge, 472 lodging options at River Lodge, 20 villas and, soon, 29 cabins, which are currently under construction. It also has two outdoor waterparks, Lake Wilderness and Salamander Springs, and one indoor waterpark, the Wild WaterDome.

In honor of the resort's fifteenth anniversary this year, Wilderness Resorts and Waterparks is adding nearly 40,000 square feet to the

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WILDERNESS RESORT™

WILD WEST WATERPARK AT WILDERNESS RESORT

511 EAST ADAMS ST,
WISCONSIN DELLS, WI 53965

WWW.WILDERNESSRESORT.COM

ADMISSION PRICES: VARIES

DATES OPEN: YEAR-ROUND

SIZE/ACRES:
PARK: 70,000 SQ FT.; RESORT: 600 ACRES

CAPACITY:
PARK: 1600; RESORT: SEVERAL THOUSAND

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:
YEAR-ROUND:
AQUATICS: 100; RESORT: 700
SEASONAL:
AQUATICS: 300; RESORT: 1200

CLIENTELE (PERCENT
LOCAL VS. TOURIST):
100% TOURISM

SUPPLIERS

WILD WEST WATERPARK AT WILDERNESS RESORT

DEVELOPMENT/DESIGN:
ADC; RAMAKER & ASSOCIATES;
PROSLIDE TECHNOLOGY INC.

CONSULTANTS: RAMAKER &
ASSOCIATES

CONSTRUCTION: HOLTZ BUILDERS
INC., PROSLIDE TECHNOLOGY INC.,
AND BADGER SWIMPOOLS

WATERSLIDES: PROSLIDE
TECHNOLOGY INC.

TUBE/RAFT/RIDE CONVEYOR:
VAN STONE CONVEYOR

RAFT/TUBES/MATS: TUBE PRO INC.

CHILDREN'S INTERACTIVE PLAY
STRUCTURE: PROSLIDE TECHNOLOGY

FURNITURE: TELESCOPE CASUAL
FURNITURE

LOCKERS: TIBURON LOCKERS INC.

POOL AND/OR DECK COATINGS:
BADGER SWIMPOOLS AND CONCRETE
COVERINGS

FILTRATION EQUIPMENT:
BADGER SWIMPOOLS

PUMPS: BADGER SWIMPOOLS

CHEMICAL: BADGER SWIMPOOLS

CHEMICAL CONTROLLERS:
BADGER SWIMPOOLS

SCALE SYSTEM: CAPITOL SCALE
COMPANY AND SR SCALES

FOOD/EQUIPMENT: BOELTER
LANDMARK AND SYSCO

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WWW.WILDERNESSATTHESMOKIES.COM

WILDERNESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S OUTDOOR SEASONAL 50 ACRE WATERPARK, WWW.SOAKYMOUNTAINWATERPARK.COM

ADMISSION PRICES: LIMITED DAILY ADMISSION PURCHASE OPPORTUNITIES \$39 AND UP

DATES OPEN: YEAR ROUND

SIZE/ACRES: INCLUDING THIS EXPANSION 106,000 SQUARE FEET AND OUR CURRENT OUTDOOR WATERPARKS, LAKE WILDERNESS 2.25 ACRES AND SALAMANDER SPRINGS AT .5 ACRES

CAPACITY: THIS EXPANSION WILL MORE THAN DOUBLE OUR CURRENT PARK CAPACITY.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: YEAR-ROUND: 680; SEASONAL: 1200

CLIENTELE (PERCENT LOCAL VS. TOURIST):

ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY OVERNIGHT LODGING GUESTS WITH DAILY ADMISSION AVAILABLE SELECT DATES THROUGHOUT YEAR.

UNIQUE PARK PROGRAMS: OUR WINTER SEASON BRINGS WINTER WILDERLAND INTO OUR LAKE WILDERNESS OUTDOOR WATERPARK. THIS AREA INCLUDES S'MORES PITS, ICE SKATING, SANTA VISITS, CUSTOM STUFFED PLUSH ANIMALS, OUR TACOLICIOUS FOOD TRUCK FEATURES ALL OF YOUR WINTER FOOD AND BEVERAGE FAVORITES, AND MUCH MORE.

STAFF RETENTION PROGRAMS OR IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS: FAMILY COMPETITION STYLE 2 HOUR INSERVICE IN THE SLOW SEASON, BEAD PROGRAM IN THE SUMMER, DIVE-IN MOVIES, AND FLOWRIDER COMPETITIONS FOR THE GUARDS.



The Edge Dueling Watercoaster at Soaky Mountain Waterpark.

WILDERNESS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

resort's indoor waterpark. The expansion, which is on track to be completed by the end of the year, includes adding a three-story water coaster designed by White-Water. It will be the world's first watercoaster with colorful, spellbinding reverse AquaLucent effects.

The waterpark expansion will also include Forbidden Caverns Lazy River designed by Aquatic Development Group in partnership with Moment Factory. It will be the first of its kind immersive lazy river, and will feature a tunnel experience complete with LED color changing kaleidoscope lighting, mirrors and projections.

Finally, the resort will be taking advantage of the waterpark's expanded rooftop by adding Lookout Lagoon, a roof top pool with a glass edge designed by Bradford Pools. This area will also be home to the Peak Rooftop Bar and Eatery, three rooftop cabanas

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SUPPLIERS

WILDERNESS AT THE SMOKIES

DEVELOPMENT/DESIGN: ADCI

RIVER TECHNOLOGY: MOMENT FACTORY

CONSTRUCTION: HOLTZ

THEMING: WILDERNESS RESORTS AND WATERPARKS

WATERSLIDES: WHITEWATER

TUBE/RAFT/RISE CONVEYOR: VAN STONE

WAVE POOL: ADG

WAVE GENERATOR: ADG

SURF SIMULATOR: FLOWRIDER

RAFT/TUBES/MATS: RAVE, TUBEPRO, ZEBEC, ZPRO

FURNITURE: TELESCOPE CASUAL FURNITURE

LOCKERS: TIBURON

FILTRATION EQUIPMENT: ADG

CHEMICAL: BLUEWATER COMMERCIAL AQUATICS SERVICES

CHEMICAL CONTROLLERS: BECSYS CONTROLLERS

SCALE SYSTEM: ARLYN SCALES

ADMISSION SYSTEM: HOTEL PMS IS VISUAL ONE

MERCHANDISE: WILCOR INTERNATIONAL, MUTUAL SALES, AND TEDDY MOUNTAIN

FOOD/EQUIPMENT: KATOM RESTAURANT SUPPLY

UNIFORMS: ABC EMBROIDERY AND WATER SAFETY PRODUCTS

WILDERNESS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

and an entertainment stage area. For convenience, an elevator will transport guests to and from this area.

In addition to the waterpark expansion, the resort is adding an indoor suspended Cloud Coaster, The Rocky Top Glider, to its Adventure Forest dry attraction area. It will have a track length of approximately 400 linear feet with two lift hills, soaring riders high in the sky. It will be the first of its kind in Tennessee. Only eight other versions of it exist in the world.

The resort also recently added Molly's Shake Shoppe to the Wild WaterDome's quick service area and completely renovated its full-service restaurant area overlooking the WaterDome into Camp Social, a food hall serving tacos, pizza, burgers, a breakfast buffet and more.

Soaky Mountain Waterpark is also making its own impression with its two watercoasters that can't be found anywhere else in the World. The Avalaunch, designed by ProSlide and The Edge, by WhiteWater, provide the ultimate opportunities for those guests who love an adrenaline rush. In fact, the waterpark is hosting a coaster clash for summer 2023 where guests can vote for their favorite coaster.

"Our company is all about making sure we are 'wow-ing' our guests. If you don't have unique things at your waterparks, guests won't feel inspired to come back," says Eck. "That's why we live by the philosophy 'bigger, better, best!' It's also why working for our company is so much fun. We're constantly innovating and striving to leave our guests thinking what will they think of next?" •

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